Motor Vehicle Services
TALE LITE
JULY/AUGUST 1991 VOL. 18 NO. 2 New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of Motor Vehicles

Demand runs high for new 7-character license plates

By Maureen A. Sczpanski

With seven-character vanity plates now available, motorists have a wider range of combinations to choose from when putting that "personal" touch on their vehicles.

According to Ernestine Buchanan, supervisor of the Special Plates Unit, the new license plates should be very popular.

"Right after the program was announced, we started getting phone calls," she said. "One person took almost 300 calls in just one day. People are even federal expressing their requests to make sure they get the plates they want."

To help motorists who applied for the seven-digit plates before the program started, the unit put past requests on reserve. These people will now be first in line for their plates.

The characters will be smaller on the new plates and no punctuation marks or symbols, such as the state silhouette on regular plates, can be used.

Since the special plate program began 15 years ago, MVS has issued almost 220,000 sets of the vanity plates, averaging about 15,000 annually. In April 1991, more than 1,000 sets of new vanity plates were issued and in May more than 970 were issued. The additional combinations now available should allow the division to issue about 30,000 new sets of plates in the next year.

A one-time fee of $50 will be charged for the plates, in addition to the regular registration fee.

Imagination only limit to choices

People placing orders for the popular seven-character plates are limited only by their imaginations.

The plates open up a whole range of choices, and motorists are taking advantage of them, said Ernestine Buchanan, supervisor of the Special Plates Unit.

A few of the selections came to mind, as she worked at her desk. Someone wanted to say CLASSIC. Another person, no doubt a sports enthusiast, picked FISHING.

A hockey fan decided to spell out FLYERS1. Someone who apparently liked to cruise along with good thoughts wanted to have a plate that read SWTDRMS.

"A lot of people like to have their names on their plates. The new plates mean more names can be used," Buchanan said. Among the names that proved popular were MARLENE, HEATHER and VALERIE.

Photo by Maureen Sczpanski

***STOP, THIEF**—Safety Specialist 1 Joe Colletti checks the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) on a car during an inspection at the Elizabeth salvage facility. Done at three sites around the state, salvage inspections help deter automobile thefts. For more on this program, turn to page 7.*

THE TALK AT MVS

Congratulations to **Laura Ciolino,** record technician 2 at the Wayne Regional Service Center, and husband, **Michael,** on the birth of their first child, **James Michael,** on June 3.

If **Jack Scaccetti,** buyer in the Purchasing Unit, has a bigger smile these days, it's because he's a grandfather for the ninth time. **Morgan Joy Geist** was born May 11 to his daughter and son-in-law, **Lorri** and **Allen Geist.** She joins a sister, **Natalie,** one year.

Daughters **Adriane and Kristin** wish dad, Exam Technician **Charlie Negron,** of the Rahway Driver Testing Center, and mom, **Sara,** a happy 11th wedding anniversary. The big day was June 14.

Eva Samachson, senior technician at the Imaging Systems Center, and her husband, **Harvey,** are celebrating the birth of their first child, **David Jeffrey,** on May 15. Grandmother **Frieda David** is a support services representative 3 in the Accident Reporting Unit of Driver Fitness and Control.

The Toms River Inspection Station welcomed back **Steve Fleming** and **Ed Torcicollo,** safety specialists 2, who were called to active duty in their reserve units when the Persian Gulf war started. Fleming served in Saudi Arabia and Torcicollo was stationed in Louisiana.

First the good news, and then the good news: **Barbara DeFago,** customer service rep 4 at the Flemington Agency, is celebrating the birth of twins. **Alizia Maria** and **Jessica Lynn** arrived May 31 in St. Peters Hospital, New Brunswick.

Elizabeth C. Kish, daughter of Field Monitor 1 **Louis Kish,** Technical Support, graduated magna cum laude from Rider College with a B.A. in elementary education/American studies.

Condolences are extended to **Jean Sampson,** exam technician at the Rahway Driver Testing Center, on the death of her sister, **Muriel Edwards,** on May 28.

(Cont. on Page 3)

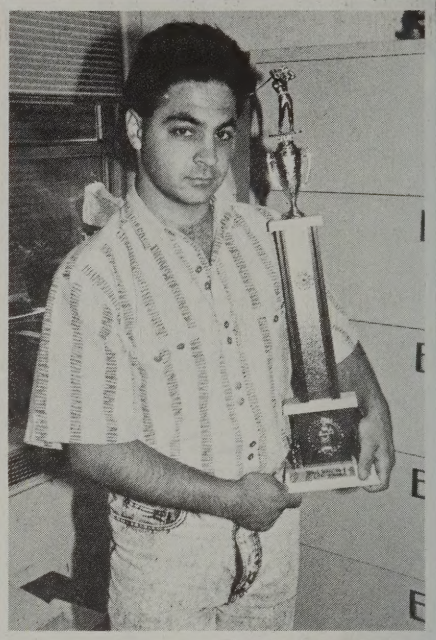


Photo by George Robinson

***GOLF CHAMP**—Joseph Palma, personnel aide 2 in the Personnel Management Bureau, holds the trophy he won at the Office of Attorney General (OAG) Golf Tournament June 7 at the Eagles Nest Country Club in Gloucester County. Palma shot a 79 on the 18-hole, par 72 course, tying with Pat Scheffer, manager of the Regulatory Affairs Office. The win went to Palma, who scored lowest on the 7th hole, considered the course's hardest.*

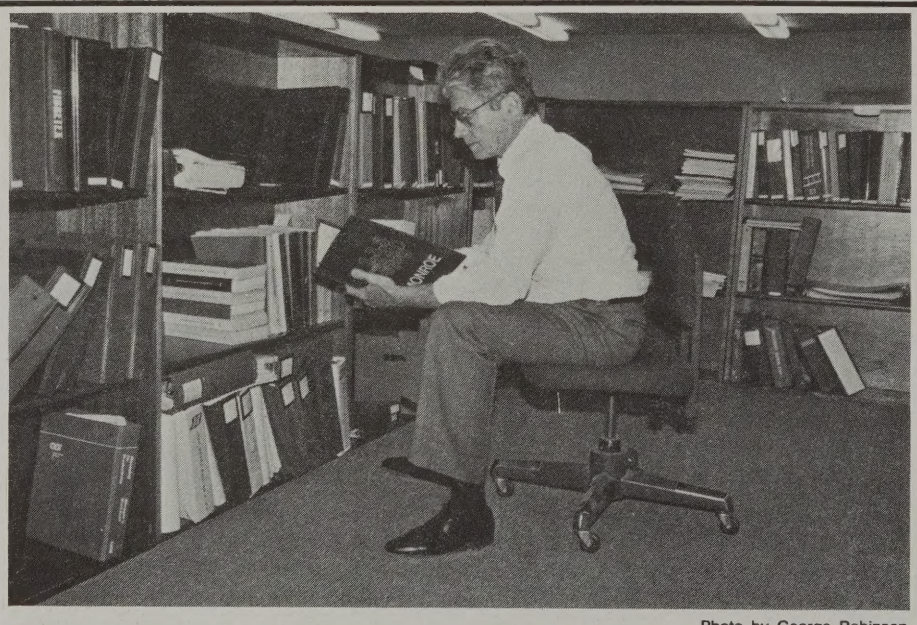


Photo by George Robinson

RESOURCE CENTER—*John Ryan organizes the division's new Resource Center on the sixth floor of 25 S. Montgomery St. The center brings together reference materials, technical reports and publications for use by MV people who are doing research about the division. For information about the documents available and how to take them out, call Ryan, at 633-0817.*

Cards of thanks

My family and I thank you for your donation to the Sunshine Foundation in memory of my brother, Andrew Vanella, who died April 19.

Anne Scheffer
Office of Special Assistance

* * *

Thanks, everyone, for your kind thoughts and generosity during my recent bereavement. It's nice to know I have so many friends at MVS.

Sallie K. Warren
Data Output Section

* * *

Thanks for the cards, money and concern during my bereavement after the deaths of my father, Clinton Peterson; my uncle, John Weaver; and my grandmother, Lottie Campbell.

Celestine Wilson
Probationary Driver Unit

Many MV people opt for early retirement

About 100 MV people, many with 30 and 40 years of state service, are taking advantage of an early retirement option offered under legislation signed by Governor Florio on May 13.

This number was expected to grow as more eligible employees took advantage of this program. Requests had to be filed with the Division of Pensions by August 1, and retirees must leave by September 1.

To be eligible for the early retirement plan, employees must be at least 50 years old and have 25 years or more of service. People who are at least 60 can retire after a minimum of 20 years service.

Since there's a high volume of retirement requests being sent to the Division of Pensions, employees planning their retirements are asked to notify Joan Horn, division payroll and records supervisor, at 609-292-4821. She will certify wages and send forms and retirement applications to the Division of Pensions.

MV people who are interested in early retirement but don't have enough state service time accrued may want to buy back pension time in the Public Employees Retirement System.

To take advantage of this buy-back plan, employees should complete and send to Pensions a "request to purchase service" form, available from the Personnel Management Bureau.

Those with questions may call the Pension hot line, 609-777-1928.

Acting Director Skip Lee (left) presents a letter of congratulations to Donald H. Giberson on his retirement as assistant director after 31 years of state service. The letter cited Giberson for his loyalty, commitment and dedication and for leaving "a positive legacy which we will be able to build on for the future, since you have contributed significantly in all the major areas of Motor Vehicles."

Photos by George Robinson

Betty Ann Burke, who retired as section supervisor of Personnel Services after 38 years with the division, cuts a cake on her last day of work, June 28. Lining up for a piece are (from left) Rose Day, Joan Horn, Nancy Dempsey, Lisa Bell and Lisa Quinto.

THE TALK AT MVS

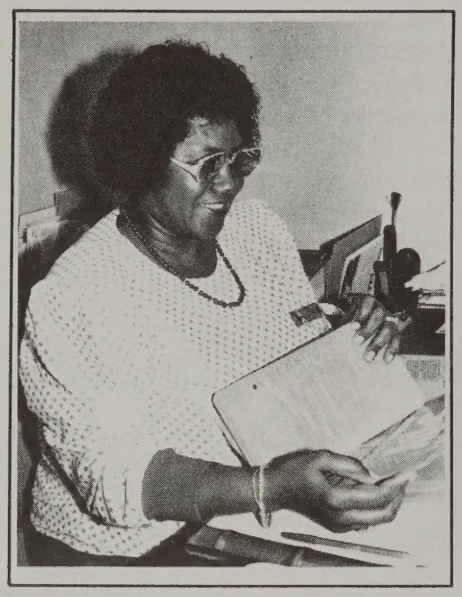
(Cont. from Page 2)

Uthan Bills, safety specialist 2 at the Paramus Inspection Station, and his wife, **Pauline,** welcomed their second daughter, **Tamara,** born May 24. She joins a sister, **Tashika.**

Wedding bells rang for **Jerry Jagger,** supervisor of the Paramus Inspection Station, and Safety Specialist Trainee **Gloria Massari,** of the Morristown Inspection Station. The couple were married May 19.

(Cont. on Page 6)

PROFILE



Ernestine Buchanan

Position: Supervisor of the Special Plates Unit. In the position she's held for the past three years, she manages 18 people.

MV career: Starting in January 1956 as a clerk typist, she has been in Special Plates since 1977. (Her MV career will end on August 1, when she opts for early retirement.)

Retirement plans: "To cook more for my husband and stay involved in my church." (On Sundays Ernie plays the organ at her church, a musical service she's performed for the last 34 years.) An avid gardener, she also plans to get out and plant the flowers she's always wanted in her yard.

Residence: Ewing Township, where she was born and raised. "I've lived here just about my whole life."

Family: Husband, William; son, Greg, and daughter, Karen (also an MV employee). Four grandchildren, Greg Jr., Sheron, Myesha and Lamere.

What she'll miss most about MVS: "The Special Plates Unit, one of the greatest places in MV. Everyone's so cooperative and they help each other. It's like we're a big family."

Softball team has winning season

The division's softball team enjoyed a winning season this year! At press time, our players had a 7-2 record—seven wins and two losses.

MV people were swinging for the fences and sliding into bases in the 1991 NJ Department of Transportation Softball League, made up of 11 other state government teams.

Played on the three Department of Defense fields behind the National Guard Armory on Eggerts Crossing Rd., the games started at 6 p.m. The season's last game was August 1.

"We encouraged our co-workers to come out to the games to watch us," team captain Paul Stevens, of Central Services, said.

Others on the team were Brian Beke, George Benson, Don Borowski, (assistant coach), Tom Bromley, Walt Calcese, Greg Calisti, George Chewning, Frank Costantino, Joseph Csolak, Tony Drago, Dennis Filidore, Bill Hoffman, Michael LaRossa, Ed Lawler, Skip Lee, Joseph Passarelli, Robert Petrino, Steven Smith, Carl Todaro and Ed Wasielewski.

SCOREBOARD

Game 1 (May 9)
MVS (15) vs. OTIS (9)

Game 2 (May 15)
MVS (16) vs. OTIS (15)

Game 3 (May 23)
MVS (17) vs. DOT (10)

Game 4 (June 4)
MVS (22) vs. LOTTERY (6)

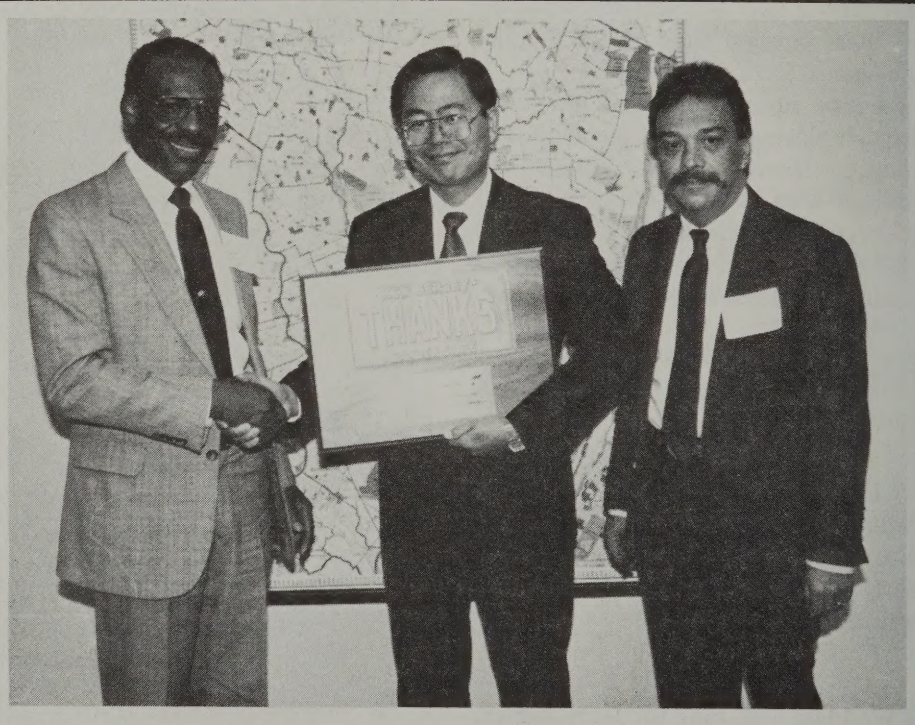
Game 5 (June 11)
MVS (12) vs. DOT (10)

Game 6 (June 20)
MVS (19) vs. DOT (18)

Game 7 (June 25)
DEP (11) vs. MVS (7)

Game 8 (July 11)
DOT (11) vs. MVS (7)

Game 9 (July 16)
MVS (25) vs. DOT (4)



TRANSLATION: THANKS—Technical Support supervisors Horace Womble (left) and William Fiorentino present a "thanks" license plate plaque to Yoshi Nakamura (center), of the Panasonic Corp., for his work in translating the written driver test into Japanese. In addition to English, MVS offers the test in 15 languages.

New office automation system on the way

By Edyth Hetman

Just when you thought your 5520 word processing system was an old friend who would be loyal to the end, guess what?

There's a new electronic kid on the block.

Office Automation people soon will replace the IBM 5520 system with the DEC/VAX 4000 and will expand the entire network. With this new system MV employees will be able to do a lot of functions not available through the 5520 terminals.

The new office automation network system, which lets you exchange documents between terminals (E-mail), will be installed first at 25 S. Montgomery St. and 137 E. State St. Training will begin in the fall.

The small terminals with eye-saving brown screens will put WordPerfect at your fingertips.

In addition to this word processing function, MV people will also be able to access a business calendar to schedule appointments and meetings, while a calendar check feature will prevent you from scheduling two meetings at the same time.

If that isn't enough, how about a thesaurus, an English dictionary and access to laser printers?

"The new DEC/VAX system will save the division about $50,000 a year, but best of all, will allow everyone to tie in to the division and the Department of Law and Public Safety," said Marcy McGann, Office Automation manager.

"We won't be wasting a single piece of equipment, since even the personal computers (PCs) we're using now will be linked to the new system. We'll also have equipment that can be upgraded," she said.

If there's a question when you're in the middle of a job, the DEC/VAX lets you call up a help function so you can review areas that aren't clear.

Enhancements to the software will give the division a full range of electronic capabilities on the one system, McGann added.

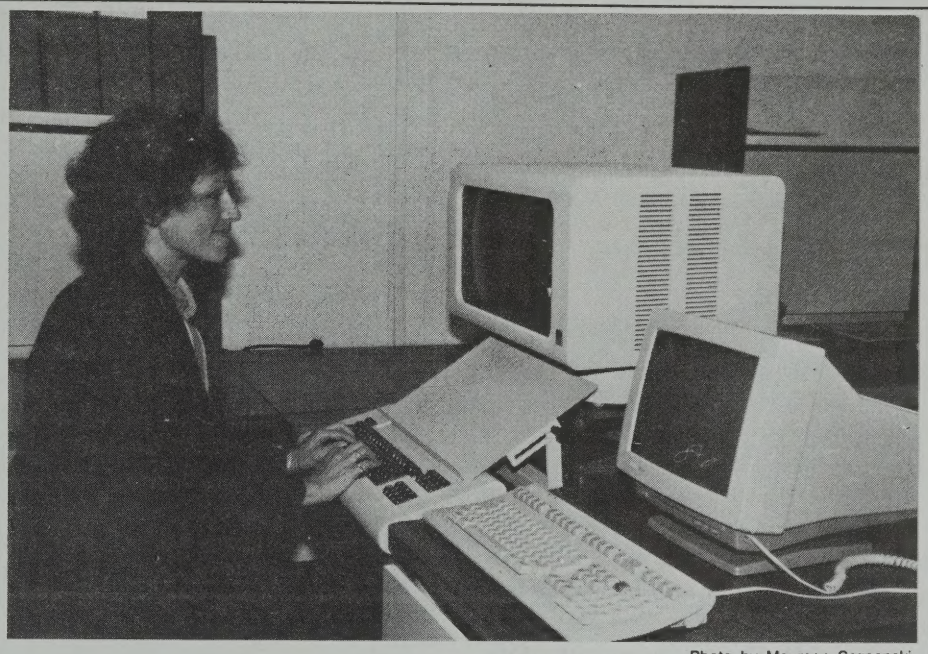


Photo by Maureen Sczpanski

Marcy McGann operates the IBM 5520. The new DEC/VAX 4000 (right) comes on line later in the year.

Remember when?

(How's your memory? The following items were printed a decade ago in the June 1981 *Tale Lite*.)

1. More than 200 MV people and their guests celebrated with good food, dancing and socializing on Friday, May 15, 1981 at the Polish-American Club. What were they celebrating?

2. Employees gathered on June 6, 1981 from 1 to 7 p.m. on the grounds of the German-American Club in Yardville for "one of the most popular annual social events of the year." What was going on?

* * *

ANSWERS

1. The 75th anniversary of the division.
2. The third annual Motor Vehicles picnic.

THE MAILBAG

Thanks . . .

. . . We had a serious problem with our service technician's vehicle. It was mistakenly impounded for not having a registration. . . . Finally I called Charles Middleton (CSIS in the Correspondence Center), and soon my problems were solved.

For three days he verbally walked me through what was starting to seem like a terrible nightmare. He continued to call me to follow up with this confusing situation, until I was completely satisfied with the result.

My thanks to Mr. Middleton for a job well done.

Elizabeth L. Hogan, Wayne

Efficient . . .

After several trips to Trenton and many telephone calls, we still could not solve the puzzle . . . that is, until we enlisted the aid of Kandace Brown (record technician 3, Wayne Regional Service Center). She was extremely courteous and very efficient.

Within a short period of time, Ms. Brown answered our questions and satisfactorily explained the situation.

Bruce Tuttle
NJ Bell Telephone Co.

Lucky . . .

Being in a business that deals with the needs of the general public, I know how hard it is to find people that will satisfy everyone's needs.

You're lucky to have people such as these. Your agency (Lodi) has employees you can be proud of.

Thomas M. Connolly
Westwood

MV people receive training on issuing CDLs

MV people are learning how to issue commercial driver licenses this summer.

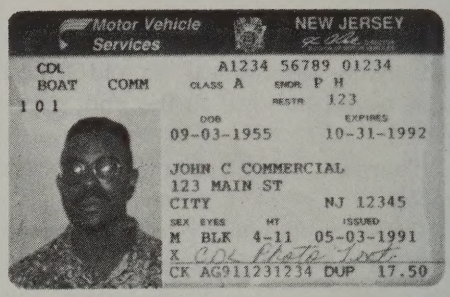
Training sessions began July 22 to teach employees how to cross check motorists' driving records against other states to make sure that they have only one license and that they have no serious MV violations that could keep them from getting a CDL. Trainees will work on both the Honeywell and comprehensive systems.

Such checks are done through the national Commercial Driver License Information System (CDLIS), which MVS started hooking into in May. The division will start issuing commercial driver licenses in September.

Set to run through August, the training is being held at the Deptford and Wayne Regional Service Centers, Quakerbridge Plaza and the old Ridgefield Agency. About 1,000 MV people are expected to attend.

Included in the training are people from both the state and private agencies and the Telephone Center, Data Base Corrections and Driver Control Services. Instruction also is being provided for safety specialists, Driver Testing Center people, record technicians and driver improvement analysts from the regional service centers.

Trainers are Rudene Vaught, principal training technician; Ira Kupersmit, senior training technician; Cora Sue Santopietro, senior training technician; and Lorna Campbell, training technician. Technical Support and Systems Administration people are helping them.



Sample commercial driver license (CDL).

THE TALK AT MVS

(Cont. from Page 3)

Congratulations to **Janet Jarzyk,** record technician 2 in Driver Fitness and Control, on her marriage May 31 to **John Cimbala.**

Condolences are extended to the family of **Shirley Ann Cox,** support services representative 3 in Driver Fitness and Control, who died May 24 at the age of 41. She has been with MVS since 1971.

Terry Jones, office automation specialist 2 in Systems Analysis and Control, and **Sonja Alexander,** computer programmer at OTIS, were married July 13 at the Wayne Avenue Baptist Church, Trenton. They honeymooned in the Poconos.

Congratulations to **Dean Stout,** supervisor of buildings and equipment, Facilities Management, and his wife, **Donna,** on the arrival of their first child, **Dean Shawn Stout Jr.,** on May 28. He's the second grandchild for Investigator 2 **Sue Stout**, of Information and Systems Management.

Marie Kraus, personnel assistant in the Southern Region, is a new grandmother. **Lauren Elizabeth** was born June 25 to her daughter, **Joanne Harris.**

Training consolidation . . .

Training units around the state were consolidated under the Department of Personnel (DOP) on July 1. MVS training people now work in DOP's Human Resource Development Institute (HRDI), which handles a variety of training programs for state agencies.

Of the 13 people who were in the former MVS Employee Development Section, four employees were assigned to provide training for the division: Vaught, Kupersmit, Santopietro and Campbell. Assisted by Maria Pintye, support services representative 2, they'll stay in Building 12A at Quakerbridge Plaza.

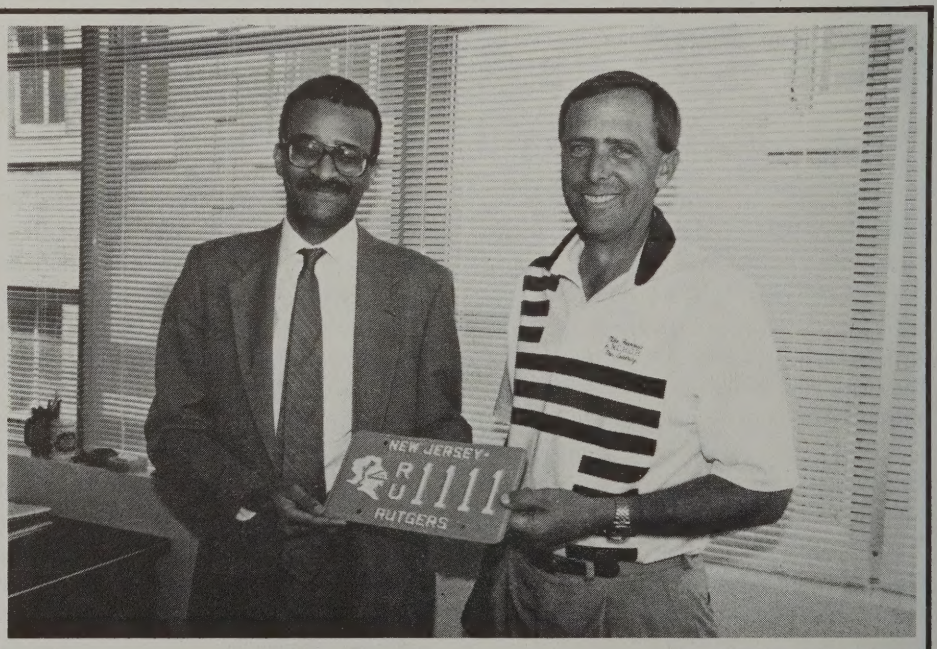


Photo by George Robinson

***A PLATE FOR RUTGERS**—Acting Director Skip Lee presents the first Rutgers University license plate to football coach Doug Graber (right). Altogether, 354 sets of the special organization plates were issued to the state university's alumni and faculty.*

Salvage inspections help stop thieves

By Maureen A. Sczpanski

Photos by Maureen Sczpanski

Supervisor Keith Sorensen and Joe Colletti, SS1, check replaced parts on a vehicle during a salvage inspection.

What kind of person would take a hard-top vehicle with leather seats and turn it into a convertible with a velour interior? Give up? A thief, of course.

But thanks to MVS' salvage inspection program, people like this are often caught and brought to justice. Efforts by MV people at the Elizabeth salvage site (one of three such facilities in the state), coupled with investigations by local and state police, helped to stop this particular thief.

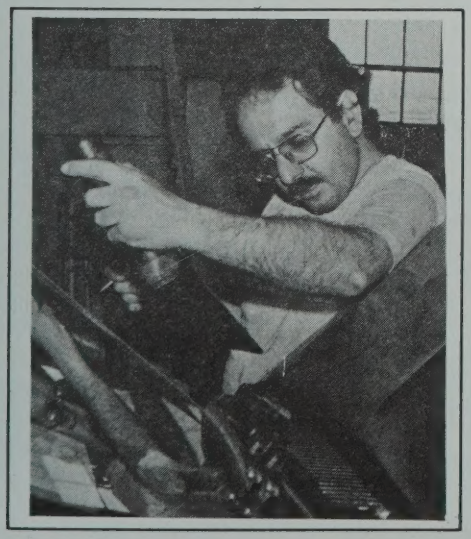
Along with salvage operations in Wayne and Millville, the Elizabeth site performs detailed inspections of vehicles that were stolen or damaged beyond repair. The hour-long inspections cost motorists $200 and play a vital role in preventing vehicle thefts and identifying fraudulent motor vehicle documents, such as titles.

According to Keith Sorensen, supervisor 3 in Elizabeth, owners of vehicles that were stolen or totaled in an accident must first get a salvage certificate from MVS. This certificate lets the insurance company or new owner sell the vehicle or transfer ownership.

The vehicle can't be registered or operated with just a salvage certificate, though. To get back on the road, the vehicle must go through salvage inspection, he explained.

Who would want to go through all this effort?

"Mostly auto repair companies and dealers," Sorensen said. "A lot of these places will fix junked cars and resell them. They'll rebuild the vehicle, replacing just about all of the parts."



Done in a closed garage without the owner present, the inspection includes a long list of items that must be manually checked by the safety specialists working at the salvage site.

For instance, MV people match up vehicle identification numbers (VINs) on the body and any parts replaced with those VINs reported on corresponding receipts from repair shops, dealers and junk yards.

Receipts are required for all major auto parts that are replaced. These parts include the engine, transmission, bumpers, fenders, doors, frame and roof—to name just a few. MV people also check to see if the "public" VIN (usually found on the dashboard) coincides with the make and model of the car. Similar to the way our driver license numbers help identify our age and eye color, the combination of letters and numbers that make up a VIN help identify the make, model and year of the vehicle.

"We use a book from the National Auto Theft Bureau," he said. "If a number was changed or doesn't match, we call the State Police."

Before and after photos of the vehicle must also be brought to the inspection to show what repairs were done.

MV people must also check the "confidential" VIN to see if it matches the numbers supplied. This number is hidden in different areas on all vehicles and only those performing the inspections know where to find them.

A vehicle examination check sheet helps make the job a little easier for the safety specialists. Information on equipment, model, color and year is included on the list, which offers an easy way to review what was checked and what still must be done.

Until 1988, the State Police worked with MV people at the salvage inspection sites. Although the operation was turned over to MVS, the State Police still provide daily info on cars scheduled for salvage inspections and work closely with division employees at all three sites.

Salvage inspections are scheduled on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Helping others is what Henry Nolze does best

By Maureen A. Sczpanski

If you thought there was no such thing as a good Samaritan, just visit the Toms River Inspection Station and ask for Henry Nolze.

An MVS veteran of 16 years, the safety specialist 1 was recently recognized by the Ocean County Courteous Driver Campaign for helping a stranded motorist.

While Nolze was driving home from work, the car in front of him stalled. Despite the bumper-to-bumper rush hour traffic, Nolze stopped and helped the elderly motorist start her car. He also directed traffic around the vehicle until she was on her way.

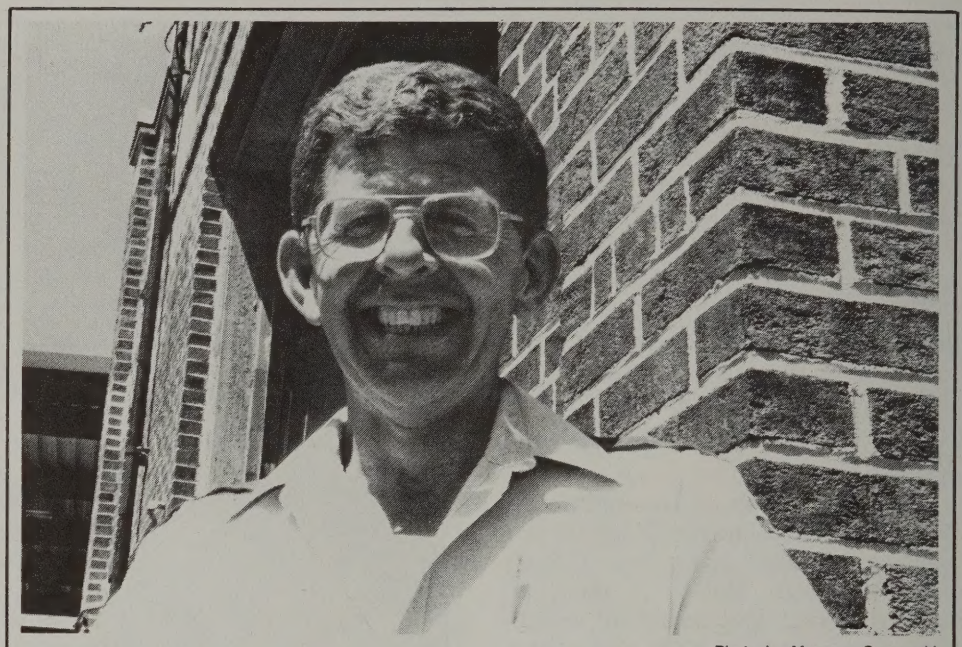


Photo by Maureen Sczpanski

Henry Nolze stands outside the Toms River Inspection Station.

'I just helped her'

"When I went over to the car, she blamed me for making her car stall," he explained. "Since I'm used to dealing with all different types of people on the lanes, it didn't bother me. I just helped her."

This wasn't the first time Nolze has offered assistance to a stranger. For instance, "there was the time this woman's car overheated," he said.

"I helped her move her car off the lane and warned her not to open the radiator," he continued. "As I walked away, I heard her screaming. Sure enough, she'd opened the radiator and was burned."

Quick thinking by Nolze, who immediately applied ice water to the antifreeze burn, helped save the woman from more severe injuries.

Helped put out car fires

Nolze has also helped put out car fires, running one time through a long line of cars at the inspection station carrying a fire extinguisher. On the parkway, he'll stop and help a motorist change a tire or call for help.

He regularly assists the elderly and disabled people who frequently come through the Toms River station.

"One time, I had a developmentally disabled woman in the passenger seat of the car I was inspecting and she couldn't get out," he explained. "By encouraging her to put her arms around my neck, I was able to lift her out of the car and onto a comfortable seat. I did the same thing to get her back."

As the vehicle continued down the lane to the next position, he told her, "Now you can tell your friends you got a hug at the inspection station. She was all smiles."

His understanding and compassion could also stem from the year and a half he and his wife spent caring for a teenage boy with cerebral palsy. In the time he was with them, Nolze proudly explained, the boy went from being a D student to a B average. "He was in a wheelchair when we got him, but when he left he was feeding himself," Nolze added.

The Beachwood resident says he never thinks about the consequences of helping someone. "I just do it."

Often the motorists in the lanes will ask why he's smiling. "I figure I'm here and you're here, so let's make the stay as pleasant as possible," Nolze said.

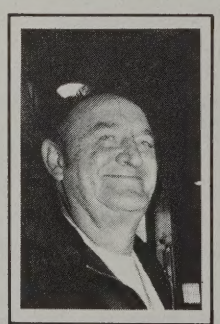
TALE LITE

State of New Jersey
Jim Florio, Governor

Department of Law and Public Safety
Robert J. Del Tufo
Attorney General

Motor Vehicle Services
Skip Lee
Acting Director

Tale Lite is printed monthly for people like Albert Roulette, safety specialist 2, Toms River Inspection Station, as a forum for information, ideas, comments and concerns.



Employees are invited to share their stories, opinions and ideas by calling 609-292-8231, by mailing them to the Communications Office, CN 164, Trenton, NJ 08666, or by coming in person to the 6th floor, 25 S. Montgomery St.

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